795 The appearance of worship among the Catholic majority follows the internationally established rites of the Church of Rome which will here be discussed only inasmuch as they present certain features peculiar to Hungary. (Religious customs connected with holidays and superstitions are discussed in Subparagraph 1h.)*

[346] Most of the villages, however small, have their own churches. The Protestant churches are ostensibly simple, while the Catholic ones are as richly decorated as the parish's financial situation permits. Divine services are being regularly attended, the men and women, with heads uncovered, are seated in separate rows, wearing their best clothes. The front seats which used to be reserved for the local gentry are now occupied by the most respected well-to-do farmers' families. For the Catholics, special Sunday afternoon services are being held but, as a rule, these are attended by women only.

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776 795 Among the Catholic peasants the veneration of saints and especially the cult of the Virgin Mary is widely practiced. The House of the Árpáds gave a number of Magyar saints to the Catholic Church; many of them still live in legends among the Magyar peasants. Szent László (Saint) is the best remembered among them, embodying the ideal of Christian knighthood: gallantry in the fight against the pagans, charity, and defense of widows, orphans

*[See cat. 116, pp. 72-92 -- Analyst]

9: Eppstein S-4 (no date) 1945 EC1 Hungary EC1

than one story practically does not exist in Hungary outside the towns and, even in the towns, the suburbs usually follow the village pattern. Nearly all of them are white-washed, a plain surface without ornamentation. (The Germans of the Danube valley like a yellow wash, the Slavs draw a band of blue above the earth level, the Rumanians often go in for gay frescoes.) Each of them stands, usually narrow end on to the street, in its own courtyard, with the stables and barns at the back. A verandah runs along the side which faces the yard. The village churches, too, are almost all of a pattern. Except in some of the towns, and in a few sheltered corners near the western frontier, all the older buildings were destroyed in the Turkish wars, and the village church to-day is practically always a plain yellow building of the eighteenth or nineteenth century, varying only in size or in the possession of one or of two bulbous towers.

THE COMMUNAL PASTURE AND POND. Common to almost all Hungary, too, are the grazing-grounds outside each village, with the typical 'Gémkut' or crane-well, standing above the trough at which the cattle are watered. The 'Gémkut' consists of a rough pole, twelve or fifteen feet high, and ending in a fork. In this is balanced another log, with a chain at each end. From one chain hangs a bucket, which is dipped into the well or trough, while the other is used, lever-wise, to raise or lower the bucket. Horses and cattle are driven out in the morning and grazed communally, often by dashing young men, who summon their charges

1. [Hungarian cottages--Analyst]

14: Evans S-3 (1950) 1953 EC1 Hungary EC1

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The Calvinist Cathedral at Debrecen, one of the many churches heavily damaged during the war and rebuilt by the Hungarian People's Democracy.

659 The bronze could so easily have been used for other purposes, but to prove that we are helping the Church, not only by words but by deeds also, we allotted this bronze to the churches."

Mr. Rákosi could have said much more than this: he could have pointed to the fact that all the churches were very largely financed by the Government, to the Government financing of church schools, to the time allowed to all the churches on the wireless and to the money, labour and raw materials provided for a most extensive campaign of church reconstruction.

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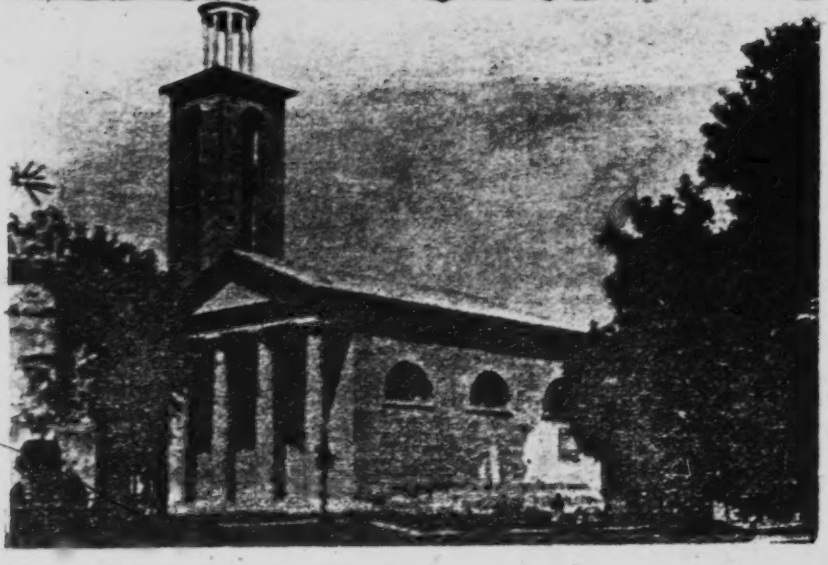

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793 The Bishop, János Péter, said that all was going well there,
[771] The outstanding problem was church re-education, the retraining that is to say of church workers, so that they would be really effective in a situation that was vastly different from the one in which they had received their training, and courses were therefore being run both for clergy and for lay workers. Their theological approach, he said, was in general a complex of Karl Barth and Ragaz.*

[814] The Reformed Church now has four theological colleges and four secondary schools. Its clergy were now swinging over to the cause of peace although in their general social outlook they tended to be conservative. The conservative elements as such had few constructive suggestions to offer in the present situation and so more and more the effective leadership of the church was passing into the hands of more progressive pastors.

Questioned about the Lutheran Bishop Ordass, who was released from prison before completing his sentence, Bishop Péter said that he was living in his bishop's house on a pension while his successor as bishop continued to live in his former parish. Ordass himself could have a parish if he wanted one.

34 The Reformed Church buildings dominate the centre of
874 Debrecen. The cathedral is a large building of the last century and, following Calvinist custom, is rather bare. The large hymnary in the pulpit is of the new, 1948 edition. The college (where the National Assembly met in 1848 and 1945) was started in the sixteenth century, although, while some of its buildings go back to the seventeen century, most of them are of later date. It is an extremely large building and houses both the Theological College and the Boys' Secondary School. The theological course lasts five years with a further one year of practical work in parishes. There are at present 100 pupils at the college. At the time of my visit they were engaged in the work of the annual "Congregation" or meeting in which both staff and students participated, all being free to express their point of view. One of the professors was extremely eager to hear of current developments in New Testament studies in Britain.

771 In Budapest Bishop Bereczky said that the church revival, which had been discussed in a previous visit in 1949, had developed not only in small, zealous groups, but in the whole church and most of the ministers have been reinvigorated. More and more do they understand that the service of the church in a socialist country can only come from those who have some knowledge and appreciation of socialism.

874 The bishop said that the theological schools were a very bright part of the picture and his views were borne out on a subsequent visit with him and its principal to the Calvin College in Budapest. Certainly nobody could have seemed happier than the theological

* The Swiss Christian Socialist.

evangelical magazine *Elö Viz* (Living Water). They are considering the publication of a new monthly magazine for congregational work.

The great need of the moment is for cantors as most of their church cantors were school teachers who abandoned their church singing when they entered the employ of the State. This would seem to indicate that when they were in church employ they did the singing as an act of necessity rather than from free choice. As to politics, all the Lutheran pastors, said the bishop, were in favour of peace but not all work for it, although the bishops have given them a lead. "Christians and Communists," he said, "can work together. The peace movement shows it." As to influences in thinking, Barthianism was still strong although not as strong as among the Reformed. Some think his influence cannot be reconciled to the Augustinian Confession* although the bishop himself regarded this confessionalism as retrograde in the modern situation. Other European influences are Ragaz and Kutter, although their influence is waning and the present situation with its new tasks needed new thought. Naturally pastors were now reading socialist works and a number of articles and lectures and conferences show the effect this has had on their thinking. This was not, nevertheless, regarded as a primary task in the present situation, in which there were so many practical tasks to solve in which theology had a good deal to say, one such being anti-semitism, which was not yet eradicated although the policy of the State was having its effect.

Ordass had been convinced that Western bourgeois democracy was right for Christianity and had been sharply opposed to the socialist direction of the country's policy.‖ He had had a considerable influence in the Lutheran Church but by now the greater part of the pastors could see that the church was developing under the present State and that they are now getting a new relationship with the people. In this matter of Ordass, the Lutheran World Federation had, he thought, been an instrument of American policy. Ordass had eventually been deposed by the Church which had petitioned the Government for his release.

Attending Catholic services, visiting Esztergom, and meeting a number of priests associated with the Catholic Priests' Peace Committee showed a vigorous continuation of the life of the Catholic Church. The symbol of the Catholic Peace Committee, a white cross on a blue ground with a dove at the foot shows a relationship which is far from being inappropriate and which, however long it took to come is now powerfully grounded.† The effect of the Church-State agreement is also symbolised by the buildings at Esztergom where the vast and rather pretentious

* One of the basic documents of Lutheranism.

‖ Bishop Ordass' trial for currency offences is discussed on p. 17.

† By December, 1952, 3,000 of the total of 4,000 priests were members.

346 cathedral built between 1822 and 1869 in imitation of St. Peter's, Rome, dominates the City; the Franciscan buildings had been nationalised, now they are returned to the Church, while the nunnery, on the other hand, has become a State school. The seminary is busy training Catholic priests and the Palace of the Prince Primate is inhabited by nuns, two vicars and church offices although uniformed retainers and cars are still in evidence.

659 792 The dissolution of certain religious orders was agreed at the time of the Church-State discussions as was the continued existence of the Franciscans, the Benedictines, the Piarists, and the Hungarian Poor Sisters of Our Lady. Monks of dissolved orders have become secular priests while the lay brothers have mainly become school teachers. Each of the remaining orders has two houses, except the Franciscans who have three.

Christians and Peace

[795] 794 208 575 More than anything else, perhaps, it is the movement for peace which has paved the way for the co-operation of all the churches in Hungary, not only with the Government but with the Communists. As the movement has developed more and more Christians have come into it. This was abundantly demonstrated in May, 1950, with the beginning of the collection of signatures for the Stockholm Peace Petition. Immediately after this the Reformed Church sent a message to the World Council of Churches pleading with it to take a stand for peace and, at the same time a letter was sent to all its parishes urging the clergy to take part in the peace movement; the Unitarians called on all their ministers to work against war; Catholic priests began to make statements for the Peace Movement, whereas the bishops opposed their participation. In June came the Hungarian Peace Congress with strong Protestant participation and some Catholic. Then came the Catholic Priests' Peace Conference, already noted, and the Church-State agreement which led the Secretary of the Catholic Priests' Peace Committee, Fr. Richard Horváth, to say:

"This agreement proves that those who initiated the Catholic Priests' Peace Movement were right. The movement has helped in bringing about the agreement and, thus, the long wished-for desire of millions is realised. With this agreement we have made a great step forward in strengthening internal peace.

"We promise to support the Bench of Bishops so that they can fulfil the agreement—which serves the best interests of our people and their spiritual welfare—with the best possible results. We express our thanks to, and our confidence in, the Government for its goodwill and understanding of the interests of the Catholic Church, and towards the workers' loyalty to faith, and respect for traditions. We again declare that we shall continue to do our duty as citizens with enthusiasm and unselfishness."